

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE MATTER OF THE)	MISC. NO.: 3:23-cr-00173
APPLICATION OF THE UNITED)	
STATES OF AMERICA FOR A)	
SEARCH WARRANT FOR 274)	
HALLWOOD, EASTOVER, SC 29044)	
)	

ORDER TO SEAL

This matter comes before the Court on motion of the United States to file the affidavit in support of the search warrant, and the respective motion to seal, under seal, with leave to provide redacted versions of the affidavit for the search warrant for public filing. The purpose of the Government's request is to protect the information contained within these documents as release of the information would jeopardize an ongoing investigation and disclose the identity of cooperating sources and potential witnesses.

Having conducted an independent review of the facts set forth in the affidavit in support of the search warrant as well as the reasons provided by the Government in its sealing motion, the Court concludes that the Government's significant countervailing interest in sealing outweighs the common-law public interest in access to such documents and that sealing the affidavit and attachments is "essential to preserve higher values." *See Media Gen. Operations, Inc. v. Buchanan*, 417 F.3d 424, 429-31 (4th Cir. 2005). The Court further concludes that, by redacting only portions of the affidavit in support of the search warrant as well as sealing only the motion to seal, and providing public access to the search warrant, the application in support of the search warrant, and this sealing order, the denial of access is narrowly tailored to serve the government's interests in sealing. *Id.* at 429.

PJB

Based on the foregoing, the Court finds that the interests of justice are best served by filing the affidavit and attachments thereto, and the return to the warrant, under seal. Working copies may be made available to the United States Attorney's Office, the United States Department of Agriculture, and any other law enforcement agency designated by the United States Attorney's Office.

Unless otherwise ordered, the documents sealed by this order shall remain sealed for one year from the date of this order, subject to extension for good cause shown and to the following unsealing protocol: Any person or party who seeks access to the documents sealed by this order may file a written motion or request to unseal. The Clerk of Court is directed to file any motion or request to unseal on the public docket. Regardless of when the motion or request is made, the documents sealed by this order shall remain sealed until the Government or other affected party has an opportunity to respond to any motion or request to unseal.

It is therefore ORDERED that the original affidavit in support of the search warrant, and the motion to seal, are to be filed under seal. It is further ORDERED that the Government shall provide redacted versions of the affidavit for a search warrant to the Clerk's office for public filing.

IT IS SO ORDERED.


HONORABLE PAIGE L. GOSSETT
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Columbia, South Carolina
October 11, 2022